

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 00906 221112Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SCA-01 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /065 W

----- 121739

R 221038Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9123

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 0906

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VT, KS

SUBJECT: VATICAN AND BISHOP CHI CASE

1. VATICAN'S DESK OFFICER FOR KOREA INFORMED US JAN. 21 THAT FOR PRESENT VATICAN NOT PLANNING ANY STEPS RE BISHOP CHI CASE BUT EXPECTS THAT WHOLE ISSUE WILL BE DEALT WITH BY KOREAN SUPREME COURT AT SOME TIME AFTER ITS JAN. 18 RECONVENING. VATICAN BELIEVES WHOLE ISSUE IS VERY AWKARD FOR CROK WHICH, FOR THIS REASON, HAS ATTEMPTED OFFER CHI A RELEASE ON MEDICAL GROUNDS WHICH HE HAS REFUSED, PREFERRING TO REMAIN IN JAIL AS A SYMBOL. WHILE VATICAN AWARE THAT BISHOP CHI HAS REFUSED TO APPEAL HIS CASE SINCE HE CONSIDERED WHOLE PROCEEDING AGAINST HIM TO BE ILLEGAL, THEY UNDERSTAND THAT HIS ATTORNEYS HAVE APPEALED IN HIS NAME, A PROCEDURE PRESUMABLY POSSIBLE UNDER KOREAN LAW. THIS IS VATICAN'S UNDERSTANDING OF HOW CASE HAS BEEN PUSHED UP TO SUPREME COURT.

2. PRO-NUNCIO DOSSENA RECENTLY REPORTED THAT GROK HAS DISCREETLY INFORMED 36 FOREIGN CATHOLIC CLERGY THAT IF THEY DO NOT CEASE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN PROSCRIBED POLITICAL ACTIVITIES, GOVERNMENT WILL BE FORCED TO EXPEL THEM FROM COUNTRY. THIS GROUP COMPRISES 16 U.S. CITIZENS AS WELL AS THREE BISHOPS (MCNAUGHTON OF INCHON, ONE IRISHMAN AND ONE FRENCHMAN). VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SUPREME COURT, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS, POLITICAL CRIMES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, ARRESTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ROME00906
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750024-0081
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750130/aaaabaes.tel
Line Count: 52
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 1
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 JUN 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VATICAN AND BISHOP CHI CASE
TAGS: PFOR, VT, KS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006